

# SEND-OFF

Lord Swinton : "Martello Tower"  
Road and Railway

Gatwick last Saturday. We shall not dwell here on this and the other striking features of the airport—they were fully described in last week's issue of *Flight*—except to say that the layout and the general spaciousness of the aerodrome, runways and buildings obviously surprised and pleased those among the official guests who had not made its previous acquaintance. These guests, invited by British Airways, Ltd., and Airports, Ltd., included a number of high officials of the Air Ministry and Air Council, foreign air attachés, and almost everyone of note in the aeronautical world. But this invasion—the main body of which arrived by a special train from Victoria, thus enabling the passengers to obtain a first-hand impression of the modernistic communicating tunnel between the station and the Martello Tower—was as naught compared with the onslaught of the general public, probably 90 per cent. of whom had come primarily to see Mr. Clem Sohn's "experiments in bird-like flight" (*vide* Press), yet who were obviously captured by the romance attaching to this very modern airport, and to the 170-odd aircraft which had congregated there for the occasion. Theoretically, the majority of the crowd was confined in a one-and-two enclosure; in practice, it wandered everywhere, among the machines and in the airport buildings, and enjoyed itself immensely.

Probably never before has there been such a varied collection of aeroplanes, both in type and size, at any flying event in this country. There were civil and military types, ranging from a *Pou-du-Ciel* to D.H. 86s, a *Vildebeest* and the *Monospar* S.T.18. A dozen clubs contributed their quota, and an arrival competition added to the fun, so that at one time the sky very nearly approached the state, beloved of the journalist, of being "darkened" by aeroplanes. Actually, during the arrival competition exactly a hundred machines clocked-in between 12.4 and 12.30. Air Marshal Sir John Higgins, who acted as judge, gave a sealed time to Mr. Rowarth, who was checking-in the arrivals. Mr. R. E. L. Beere (*Puss Moth*) touched down nearest to the sealed time, and received the Gatwick Cup



The enclosures were decorated with the flags of all nations whose countries are linked to our own by the routes of British Airways Ltd. In the air is Mr. Kronfeld's Drone.

and £15, while Mr. Dade (*Gipsy Moth*) and Mr. Frogley (*Monospar*), from Broxbourne, were runners-up.

The control officers must have had their hands pretty full, but all went well, and, with the exception of a *Moth* which had apparently found a large horse's hoofprint in a patch of still-virgin clay and accordingly stood on its nose, there were no incidents.

Lord Swinton arrived from York by air in a *Hart* of No. 24 (Communications) Squadron. He was received by Viscount Goschen (chairman of Airports, Ltd.) and his fellow directors, the directors of British Airways, Ltd., and the Southern Railway, together with Sir Francis Sheldermine, Director-General of Civil Aviation.

After inspecting the buildings, Lord Swinton and his hosts adjourned to the private owners' hangar for the official luncheon. Speeches were occasionally drowned by the Southern Railway electric trains, which led one speaker to remark that this co-operation between rail and air had its drawbacks.

Lord Swinton, in replying to the toast of "The Air Minister" (proposed by Lord Goschen), said that from time to time rather unintelligent people asked him when an

